

THE APOSTLES' SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

Little did the uneducated men Jesus chose know just how far reaching their lives would be. Peter, after having confessed that Jesus was the Christ the Son of the living God, must have been surprised that he would be given the keys to the kingdom of heaven. What a responsibility!

"And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." Matthew 16:19

As individuals and together the apostles made up a spiritual foundation upon which the church was to be built.

"having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone." Ephesians 2:20

Late in his life John had a vision of God's church, the mystical New Jerusalem. There he beheld the names of the twelve apostles as foundation stones of the glorious city. Now that is significance!

"Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb." Revelation 21:14

The apostles were not being egotistical when they made exclusive claims for the Gospel they proclaimed. They knew there was no other message equal to theirs. They had been with the Master and were witnesses of His resurrection. No other gospel was to be preached.

"But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed." Galatians 1:8

John was very clear about their position. True believers would hear the testimony of the apostles. This would mark the difference between the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. The spirit of error would attempt to circumvent the authority of the apostles' doctrine.

"We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error." I John 4:6

One of the criterion of the New Testament Canon (the compiling of authentic books) included this test: Was it written by an apostle or one closely related to an apostle? If this could not be answered in the affirmative then it was rejected. The New Testament is the preservation of the legacy of Jesus and His apostles. It is significant that Paul, who was not an original apostle but authored much of the New Testament, received endorsement from the apostles. Galatians 2:9 Peter recognized Paul's writings as being scripture.

"as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures." II Peter 3:16

APPLICATION

It is vital that our faith be established on the foundation appointed for us by Jesus through His apostles. If we haven't anchored to that time tested rock then we are being deluded. Sincerity will not make up for obedience. Jesus said there would be those who called Him, "Lord" but followed their own way. They were convinced that they were doing right because of all the miraculous signs that they were able to accomplish. Beware when results are your only test of truth. The real test is: Are we in obedience to the Word? If the Jesus and the apostles didn't teach it, I have no business believing it. These simple tests will keep us from being deceived.

"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom or heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonder in Your name?" And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!" Matthew 7:21-23

CHRIST CHURCH, POCATELLO – BIBLE STUDIES

Pocatello, Idaho

1245 N Arthur - 83202

PASTOR, STEPHEN R. YADON